



Propagating Houseplants



PROPAGATING ESTABLISHED HOUSEPLANTS

If your houseplants are starting to look a bit straggly or if they are threatening to grow through the ceiling, the best solution is to raise new plants from them.

Many of our most popular houseplants are virtually weeds in their native habitat and they are generally quite easy to propagate. The following A-Z guide gives details of how to propagate 100 houseplants using fairly simple techniques such as cuttings, divisions and offsets.

Consumers' Association also publishes 'The *Gardening Which?* Guide to Successful Propagation', which gives details of how to raise over 1,000 different garden plants from seeds, layering and cuttings. It is available from us or from bookshops price £14.99. To order your copy, please write to the Hertford address below, enclosing a cheque/PO payable to Which? Ltd.

If you would like information on how to subscribe to our other magazines – Which?, Holiday Which? or Health Which?, please write to: Which?, Castlemead, Gascoyne Way, Hertford X, SG14 1LH.

knife. Allow cut surfaces to dry out for a few days and pot up individually into 9cm (3 1/2 in) pots of soil-less compost. They should take root in 7-10 weeks.

African violet

See Saintpaulia on page 24

Ananas (Pineapple)

Offsets, spring or summer
21°C (70°F)

New plants can be grown from offsets when they have developed to reasonable size on the parent plant. Remove offsets with the bases of their stems intact once they have reached several inches in height and place in small pots of soil-less compost. Avoid saturated compost. Offsets should root in 6-10 weeks.

HOW TO PROPAGATE PLANTS IN YOUR GARDEN

Whatever plants you want to propagate in the garden, it's likely that you'll find out how to do it in the *Gardening Which?* Guide to Successful Propagation.

This hardback book explains how and when to propagate over 1,000 garden plants ranging from shrubs and trees to herbaceous perennials, alpine and wild flowers. The techniques are illustrated with helpful step-by-step drawings and there's a useful section on what to do when your cuttings don't root or your seeds don't come up.

You can get your copy from bookshops or write to: Which?, Castlemead, Gascoyne Way, Hertford SG14 1LH. The book costs £14.99 and postage and packing is free.



Acorus

Division any time, but spring and early summer best

Temperature not critical

Tease grassy clumps apart with your hand or divide older clumps with a strong knife. Pot up individually and ensure that the compost is wet at all times.

Aechmea (Urn plant)

Offsets, spring to autumn
18°C (65°F)

When the plant has flowered it slowly dies and forms young plants at the base of the stem. Once offsets have developed four or five leaves, remove them with a sharp knife. Allow cut surfaces to dry out for a few days and pot up individually into 9cm (3½in) pots of soil-less compost. They should take root in 7–10 weeks.

African violet

See *Saintpaulia* on page 24

Agave

Offsets, spring and summer
18°C (65°F)

Detach offsets from base of plant, allow to dry out for a few days and pot up individually in a potting compost with extra grit added to improve drainage. Offsets root in a few weeks if kept warm with compost on the dry side.

Aglaonema (Chinese evergreen)

Division spring, summer
18°C (65°F)

Split into small clumps or individual pieces of stem with two or three leaves attached.

Aloe

Offsets, as they develop
18°C (65°F)

As for *Agave* (see page 3).

Ananas (Pineapple)

Offsets, spring or summer
21°C (70°F)

New plants can be grown from offsets when they have developed to reasonable size on the parent plant. Remove offsets with the bases of their stems intact once they have reached several inches in height and place in small pots of soil-less compost. Avoid saturated compost. Offsets should root in 6–10 weeks.

Anthurium

Division, spring
21°C (70°F)

Tease the plant apart to separate individual crowns. Each piece should have at least one shoot. Pot up individually into 13cm (5in) pots of soil-less compost and keep warm and humid – ideally in a heated propagator.

Apelandra (Zebra plant)

Stem cuttings, any time
18°C (65°F)

After flowering, remove the old bracts and feed the plant to encourage fresh growth. Remove stem tips with two pairs of leaves attached. Trim the cutting about 3cm (1in) below the lowest leaf and treat the severed end with a rooting hormone. Insert the cuttings individually into 9cm (3½in) pots of soil-less compost. Rooting should take four to six weeks.

Aporocactus (rat's-tail cacti)

Stem cuttings, summer
15–18°C (60–65°F)

Cut off 8–10cm (4–6in) sections of cylindrical stems and allow to dry for a day or two before inserting into cactus compost. Root several cuttings into one pot for a full effect. Rooting should take about five weeks.

Araucaria (Norfolk pine)

Tip cuttings, late summer
18°C (65°F)

Take 8cm (3in) cuttings from tips of young shoots, treat with rooting hormone and insert in small pots filled with a sandy compost. Difficult and slow to root.

Asparagus fern

Division, any time
18°C (65°F)

Divide plant into sections and pot up only healthy outer portions into separate pots and keep moist. Divided plants should re-establish in 4–6 weeks.

Aspidistra (Cast iron plant)

Division, late spring/early summer
Temperature not critical

Younger plants can be teased apart with relative ease. Larger plants need to be divided with a strong knife or even a saw. Divisions should produce fresh roots very quickly.

Azalea indica (Florists' azalea)

Cuttings after flowering, summer and autumn

18°C (65°F)

Take 10cm (4in) cuttings, trim below a leaf joint and remove lower leaves. Treat with rooting hormone and insert in three parts sand to one part peat or composted bark. Try to provide an air temperature of around 18°C (65°F) and bottom heat of 15–18°C (60–65°F) by using a heated propagator without the lid say. Generally difficult and slow and may take 8 weeks or more to root.



Beaucarnea (Ponytail palm)

Cuttings, spring (when repotting)
18–21°C (65–70°F)

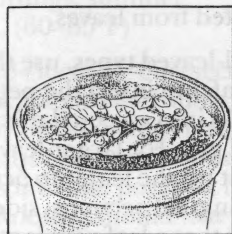
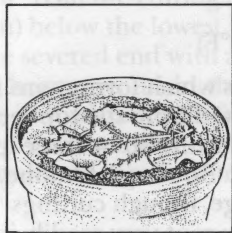
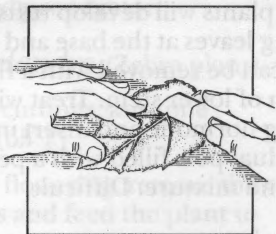
Older plants will develop tufts of arching leaves at the base and these can be removed with a firm section of lower stem. Treat with rooting hormone and insert into individual pots filled with a peat and sand mixture. Difficult.

Begonia (foliage)

Stem or leaf cuttings, spring and summer
21°C (70°F)

Begonias which form stems may be propagated from the top section of the stem with two or three leaves attached. Rooting hormone is an advantage, though cuttings generally root very readily in a cuttings compost. Foliage begonias that do not have stems can be propagated from leaves.

For small-leaved types, use the whole leaf and insert the petiole (leaf stalk) into an equal mixture of peat and grit. For larger-leaved types, cut up the leaf into 5cm (2in) triangular sections, sided, ensuring that a leaf vein is at one of the angles. Insert the vein end into the compost. For larger leaves,



you can also slit the underside of the veins with a razor blade and place flat, cut veins down, on the surface of a cutting compost. Weight down the leaf with a few clean pebbles to ensure good contact. Roots form where the veins have been cut and tiny plantlets will arise. These can be separated and potted individually when large enough to handle. Careful watering is required as fungal problems can be damaging if the compost remains very wet for long periods. Cuttings will take anything from 4–8 weeks to root.

Begonia (Flowering)

Stem cuttings, spring and summer
18°C (65°F)

The easiest to root are 8–10cm (3–4in) stem cuttings, though they can be rooted from whole leaves as for foliage begonias. Non-flowering shoots are best, otherwise remove the flowers. A rooting hormone will speed rooting, which generally takes 3–6 weeks. Insert in either pots or trays with their leaves almost touching and pot individually once well rooted.

Beloperone (Shrimp plant)

Cuttings, spring and summer
18°C (65°F)

Take 13–15cm (5–6in) cuttings from the tips of fresh green shoots and remove any coloured bracts. Trim to 3cm (1in) below lowest leaf and treat with rooting hormone. Root six cuttings in a 9cm (3½in) pot containing a standard multi-purpose compost. Cover with a polythene bag or place in a propagator. Once rooted, usually after 6 weeks or so, give an occasional feed and, once roots are well established, pot clump of cuttings into a larger pot using a loam-based compost.

Billbergia

Division, any time
15°C (60°F)

Divide established plants into clumps of several stems using a strong knife and pot up individually into 9cm (3½in) pots. Discard all old stems and any dead material present among the congested foliage. You can also remove sideshoots when about half the size of the parent plant. Allow cut surfaces to dry out for a few days before potting up.

Bryophyllum

Plantlets, any time
Temperature not critical

If the parent plant is placed on a seed box filled with potting compost, the young plantlets formed around the leaf margins will fall naturally and root in a matter of days. Once these have several leaves, pot individually.

Coleus

Cuttings, spring/summer
18°C (65°F)

Easily raised from seed but it's worth taking cuttings if you have a good variety. Take 10–15cm (4–6in) cuttings from shoot tips. Remove lower leaves, insert individually into 8cm (3in) pots and cover with polythene bags. Cuttings should root in three to four weeks.



Caladium (Angels' wings)

Division of tubers, February
18°C (65°F)

Divide tubers or separate offsets when plants are about to come into growth. Each section must have at least one new shoot. Allow wounds on cut tuber to dry before re-planting in a soil-less potting compost. Keep moist and warm, ideally in a propagator.

Calathea

Division, spring
18°C (65°F)

Pot divided sections into a soil-less compost. Keep moist and out of direct sunlight.

Campanula isophylla

(Italian bell flower)

Cuttings or division, spring
15°C (60°F)

Divide mature clumps in the spring when plants are re-potted. Alternatively, take 8–10cm (3–4in) stem cuttings, treat with rooting hormone and insert around the edge of an 8cm (3in) pot filled with a cuttings compost. Root in a propagator or cover pot with polythene bag. Rooting should take three to four weeks.

Ceropegia woodii (Rosary vine)

Cuttings or bulbils, spring to autumn
18°C (65°F)

Take cuttings from small section of stems with a single leaf attached. Insert 8–10 cuttings into an 8cm (3in) pot to ensure full appearance. Older plants develop mis-shapen bulbils on their pendulous stems – these may be removed and rooted in soil-less compost.

Chamaecereus silvestrii

(Peanut cacti)

Stem cuttings, spring and summer
Temperature not important

The stems resemble peanuts in shape and these 'peanuts' can be removed and potted up in a sandy compost.

Chlorophytum (Spider plant)

Plantlets, any time

Plantlets may be pegged down into a small pot and severed from parent plant once rooted.

Reasonably mature plantlets can also be removed from the parent and potted up straight away. Keep a small section of the old stem on the plantlet to make it easier to insert into the new pot.

Cissus (Kangaroo vine)

Stem cuttings, spring and summer
18°C (65°F)

Take cuttings with one or more leaves attached. Treat with rooting hormone and insert between 1 and 5 cuttings (depending on leaf size) into an 8cm (3in) pot of soil-less compost. Cover pot with a polythene bag and keep shaded until the cuttings roots – after about 4–6 weeks.

Citrus (Oranges, lemons or limes)

Stem cuttings, spring and summer
18°C (65°F)

Take stem cuttings with three leaves attached and treat with rooting hormone. Root in a pot covered with a polythene bag or in a heated propagator. Cuttings should root in 4–6 weeks.

Clivia

Division, January–February
18°C (65°F)

Remove offsets with a sharp knife and discard some of the matted older roots. Pot up into a loam-based compost and water sparingly until new growth can be seen. Can also be raised from seed saved from the berry-like fruits when fully ripe (bright red). Germinate at 23°C (75°F).

Codiaeum (Croton, Joseph's coat)

Cuttings or air layering
23°C (75°F)

Take cuttings from tips of stems with three or four leaves attached. Insert singly in small pots. Best rooted in a propagator but worth trying in a plastic bag. Rooting takes around three to five weeks. Mature plants may also be air-layered (see page 14).

Coleus

Cuttings, spring summer
18°C (65°F)

Easily raised from seed but it's worth taking cuttings if you have a good variety. Take 10–15cm (4–6in) cuttings from shoot tips. Remove lower leaves, insert individually into 8cm (3in) pots and cover with polythene bags. Cuttings should root in three to four weeks.

Columnea

Stem cuttings
18°C (65°F)

Take 8cm (3in) cuttings from tips of stems. Treat with rooting hormone and insert five to seven cuttings in an 8cm (3in) pot containing a soil-less compost. Pinch out shoot tips once plants start to grow.

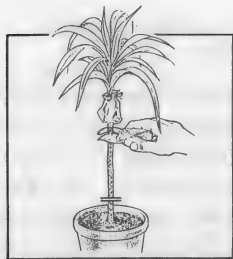


Cordyline

Stem cuttings, offsets or root cuttings, spring or summer
18°C (65°F)

Cut stems into 8–10cm (3–4in) sections using a bread knife or saw and place horizontally in boxes of sandy compost – the pieces should be only partially buried. Offsets growing up from the base of the plant may also be removed and potted individually at any time when these plantlets are present.

Many cordylines also produce thick, fleshy roots into 8cm (3in) sections and inserted vertically in peaty compost. A propagator is best for all methods.



Crassula

Stem or leaf cuttings, summer
Temperature not critical

Rooted whole leaves or sections of stem with a few leaves attached. Allow cuttings to dry for at least a full day (a week or more for large cuttings) before potting. Do not cover. Rooting should take about two to three weeks.

Crossandra

Stem cuttings
21°C (70°F)

Take 8–10cm (3–4in) stem cuttings. Best rooted in a heated propagator with some ventilation.

Cryptanthus (Earth star)

Offsets, when available
15°C (60°F)

Remove offsets that form around the parent plant and pot them individually into a soil-less compost. It may be necessary to use a wire in the shape of a hairpin to hold the offset in position until it roots.

Cyperus (Umbrella plant)

Seed or division cuttings, spring or summer
13°C (55°F)

Flowering plants placed on a bed of peat will self seed and require no attention other than moist surroundings. Older plants can be divided when re-potting. The stems will also form new plants if placed *upside down* in a jar of water.



Dieffenbachia (Dumb cane)

Always wear rubber gloves and wash hands thoroughly after handling this plant. Tips of mature stems with 3–4 leaves attached will root readily in a heated propagator – use a soil-less compost. Old plants can be propagated from 10cm (4in) sections of the woody cane, so long as each section has a growth bud. Place sections on their side in a box of compost until rooted – after about five to seven weeks. Offshoots which form at the base of plants can be potted up individually.

Dracaena

Stem sections or offsets, spring
18°C (65°F)

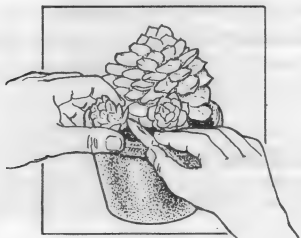
As for Cordylines (see page 10)



Echeveria

Leaf cuttings or offsets, spring and summer
15°C (60°F)

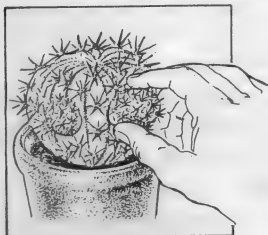
Individual leaves placed upright in sandy compost will root if kept on the dry side. Rosettes formed around the parent plant can also be detached and potted up individually.



Echinopsis

Offsets, spring or summer
Temperature not critical

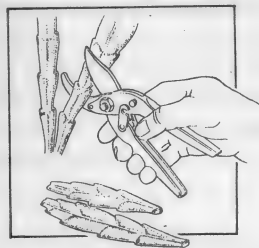
Remove offsets and pot individually in small pots of sandy compost.



Epiphyllum (Orchid cacti)

Stem cuttings, spring and summer
Temperature not critical

Use almost any piece of stem to propagate new plants. Allow cuts to dry for a day or so and pot up in a soil-less compost with a little sand added to improve drainage. They don't like lime.



2



Euphorbia pulcherrima (Poinsettia)

Stem cuttings, spring and summer
18°C (65°F)

Take cuttings from tips of stems with three leaves attached, treat with rooting hormone and insert in a soil-less compost. Maintain minimum temperature at 65°F and mist frequently.

3



Euphorbia milii (Crown of thorns)

Stem cuttings, spring and summer
15°C (60°F)

Stem tips root readily in sandy compost, if you allow wounds to dry out for a few days before potting. Sap is poisonous so keep away from eyes and mouth.

Commercially, plants are treated with chemicals to keep them dwarf – so expect the plants you propagate to grow much larger. In autumn, they also need 14 hours uninterrupted darkness every day for around six weeks in order to produce coloured bracts for Christmas. Without light control, coloured bracts may develop several months earlier.



Fatshedera

Stem or leaf bud cuttings, spring and summer
18°C (65°F)

Take 10–15cm (4–6in) cuttings of stem tips or use individual leaves with a section of stem attached. Root in a cuttings compost and cover pot with plastic bag. Rooting should take three to five weeks.

Fatsia japonica

(False castor oil plant)

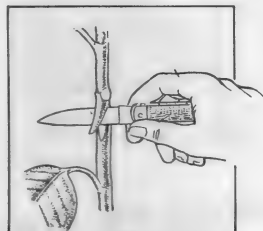
Stem cuttings, summer or spring, or root cuttings winter
21°C (70°F)

As for *Fatshedera* above. Plants producing large fleshy roots can also be propagated from 8cm (3in) root sections only just buried in compost. Variegated kinds are generally propagated by grafting them onto green-leaved plants.

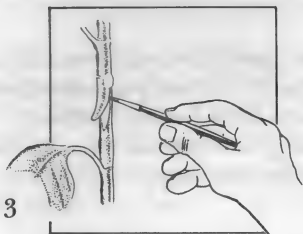
Ficus



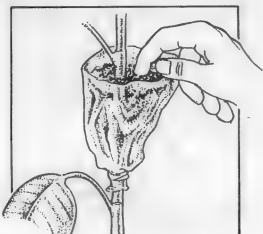
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Fittonia

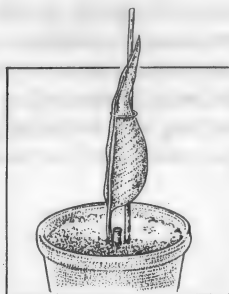
Stem cuttings, any time
21°C (70°F)

Almost any piece of stem will root in a soil-less compost if kept humid. A heated propagator is ideal.

Cuttings or air layering, spring and summer

18–21°C (65–70°F)

Ficus elastica (rubber plant) and *Ficus lyrata* (fiddle leaf fig) can be propagated from individual leaves with a small section of the main stem attached. *Ficus benjamina* (weeping fig), *Ficus deltoidea* (mistletoe fig, *F diversifolia*), *Ficus pumila* (creeping fig) and *Ficus radicans* can be propagated from 8–15cm (3–6in) sections from stem tips. Root cuttings in a pot covered with a polythene bag or in a propagator. The creeping sorts should root in about three to four weeks, while the others can take up to six to ten weeks. Plants with woody stems can also be propagated by air layering (see drawings 1–5.)



◀ Leaf cutting of rubber plant.



Guzmania

Offsets

18°C (65°F)

Detach offsets once well developed and root in 8cm (3in) pots of soil-less compost. Cover pot with polythene bag to keep moist or root in propagator. Offsets should take about six weeks to establish.



Gynura (Purple passion vine)

Stem cuttings, any time

15°C (60°F)

Almost any section of stem with a leaf attached will root. Three or four cuttings to a small pot will produce an attractive clump.



Haworthia

Offsets, spring and summer

Temperature not critical

Peel offsets (small rosettes) away from plant, allow to dry for a few days and pot individually in a cactus compost.

Hedera (Indoor ivies)

Internodal cuttings, spring or summer

18°C (65°F)

Stems with one (in the case of large leaves) or two (small leaves) attached will root readily in a soil-less compost, or even in water. Rooting should take about three to five weeks.

Heptapleurum (Parasol plant)

Stem or leaf cuttings, spring

18°C (65°F)

Take cuttings from tip of the stem with three leaves attached, or use a single leaf with a piece of the main stem attached. Cover with a polythene bag and keep shaded. Rooting should take four to eight weeks.

Hibiscus

Stem cuttings, late spring or summer

18°C (65°F)

Take 8–10cm (3–6in) cuttings from stem tips with two or three leaves attached. Root in a propagator or in a pot covered with a polythene bag.

Hoya (Wax plant)

Stem cuttings or layering, spring and summer

18°C (65°F)

Easy to root from 8–10cm (3–4in) stem tips or leaf with a section of main stem attached. Cuttings can be rooted in water or a pot covered with a polythene bag. Alternatively, peg down stems into pots and sever layer once rooted.

Hypoestes (Polka dot plant)

Stem cuttings, summer or autumn

18°C (65°F)

Easily raised from seed but better coloured forms may be propagated from almost any part of stem with a leaf attached. Treat with rooting hormone and root in a pot covered with a polythene bag or in a propagator.



Impatiens (Busy lizzie)

Stem tips, any time

18°C (65°F)

Stem tips will root freely in water or compost. Rooting should take about two to four weeks.



Jasminum polyanthum
(Jasmine)

Heel cuttings, spring and summer
15°C (60°F)

Pull 8–10cm (3–4in) side shoots from main stem so that they come away with some of the old wood attached. Root in soil-less compost in a pot covered with a polythene bag. Alternatively, longer shoots can be layered into pots. Rooting should take three to five weeks.

Jacarandra

Stem cuttings, summer
18°C (65°F)

Take 8–10cm (3–4in) from stem tips and root in peaty compost. Cover pot with polythene bag until well rooted – around three to five weeks.



Kalanchoe

Leaf or stem cuttings, spring or summer
18°C (65°F)

Place individual leaves on surface of peat and sand mixture. Alternatively, take stem cuttings with a few leaves attached and allow cut surface to dry for at least a day before potting. Rooting of both types of cutting should take about three weeks.



Lobivia

Offsets, summer
13–18°C (55–65°F)

Detach offsets and pot individually in sandy compost. Rooting should take about three weeks.



Mammalaria

Offsets, spring and summer
Temperature not critical

Remove offsets with a sharp knife and a pair of tweezers. Allow cut surface to dry for a few days and place in a cactus compost. They should root in about three weeks.

Maranta

Stem cuttings, spring and summer
21°C (70°F)

Use stem tips with three or four leaves attached, treat with rooting hormone and insert individually in small pots of soil-less compost. Best rooted in a heated propagator, where rooting will take about three weeks. Alternatively, split established plants into two or three clumps and keep warm and humid until established.

Monstera (Swiss cheese plant)

Stem cuttings, spring and summer
18°C (65°F)

Shoot tips with two or three leaves will root in soil-less compost. Alternatively, you can root 8cm (3in) stem sections without any leaves, so long as they have at least one potential bud. Bury to half their depth and root in a propagator at 24°C (78°F). Rooting should take about five to six weeks.



Neoregelia

Offsets, spring
21°C (70°F)

Pot up well developed offsets and root in a soil-less compost. Cover pot with a polythene bag or keep in propagator until rooted, about three weeks.

Nerium oleander (Oleander)

Stem cuttings, summer
18°C (65°F)

Cuttings from shoot tips about 15cm (6in) long can be rooted in water or compost. Choose shoots that have started to become woody, not the ones that are very soft. Rooting should take about three to five weeks.

Note that whole plant is poisonous so wear rubber gloves when propagating.

Nidularium

Offsets, spring
18°C (65°F)

Remove offsets, allow to dry for a day or so and pot up in a peaty compost. Cover pot with polythene bag and keep in a warm room or keep in heated propagator until well rooted, about three to five weeks.

Notocactus

Offsets, spring or summer
Temperature not critical

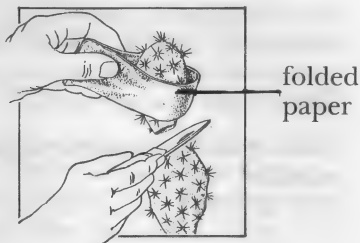
Pot up well formed offsets in small pots of cactus compost. Rooting should take three to five weeks.
Also from seed.



Opuntia (Bunny's ear cactus)

Pads, spring or summer
Temperature not critical

Remove individual pads, allow to dry for a day or so and pot up individually into a cactus compost.





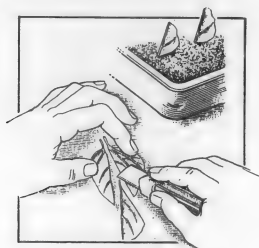
Pandanus (Screw pine)

Offsets, spring or summer
21°C (70°F)

Peel established offsets from around base of parent plants when well established and pot individually into loam-based potting compost. Cover pot with polythene bag or keep in a propagator until growing strongly.

Peperomia (Desert privet)

Stem or leaf cuttings, spring and summer
18°C (65°F)



Species that develop stems can be propagated from stem tips with two or three leaves attached, while stemless kinds can be increased by inserting individual leaves in peaty compost. Some, such as *P. argyreia* and *P. sandersii*, can be propagated by cutting leaves into sections and inserting the vein end into the compost. Rooting should take about three to five weeks.

Philodendron (Climbing species)

Stem or leaf cuttings, or air layering, spring or summer
21°C (70°F)

Take cuttings from stem tips with two or more leaves attached, or use single leaves with a piece of the main stem attached. Insert cuttings into a soil-less compost, cover with a polythene bag and keep shaded. Rooting should take about four to six weeks. Non-climbing types such as *Pinnatifidum* can only be raised from seed.

Pilea

Stem cuttings, spring
18°C (65°F)

Almost any piece of stem with leaves attached will root. Place several cuttings in a pot of peaty compost. Rooting should take three to five weeks.

Plectranthus (Swedish ivy)

Stem cuttings, any time
Above 10°C (50°F)

Almost any piece of stem with leaves attached will root in water or moist compost.



Rebutia

Offsets, spring and summer
Temperature not critical

Remove offsets, allow to dry out for a few days and pot individually in a cactus compost.

Rhipsalidopsis

(Christmas and Easter cacti)

Stem sections, spring and summer
17°C (65°F)

Break off a section of stem at leaf joint and allow to dry for a day or so before rooting in a sandy compost. Rooting should take three to four weeks.

Rhoeo (Boat lily)

Self seeding or division, spring and summer
18°C (65°F)

If you allow plants to scatter seed naturally it will germinate on moist peat or gravel around the pot. Older plant clumps can be divided.

Rhoicissus

See *Cissus* on page 9.

Rubber plant

See *Ficus* on page 14.



Saintpaulia (African violet)

Leaf cuttings, April to October
18–23°C (65–75°F)

Take a healthy leaf from the second or third row of the rosette – the outer leaves may not root. Pull the leaf away gently with the stalk – don't leave a stump behind to rot and trim the stalk to about 2 to 3cm (1in).

Insert the leaf in a 5cm (2in) pot of moist compost, perlite or sharp sand, and put into a heated propagator or cover the pot with a clear polythene bag and put in a warm, light place, but not in direct sunlight.

Once the cuttings take root, tiny plantlets will begin to appear on the leaf. This takes only a few weeks with some varieties, others can take several months. Once the plantlets are 3 to 5cm (1½ to 2in) high, remove them from the parent leaf and pot up singly into 5cm (2in) pots. Your new plants should bloom in three to four months.

You can also root African violet leaves in water. Fill a small bottle with water and cover it completely with aluminium foil to keep out the light, or use a coloured pill

bottle. Pierce a hole in the foil and insert the leaf. When the roots are about 1.5cm (½in long), either pot up the leaf or add a weak liquid fertiliser to the water and wait until the plantlets develop before potting up.

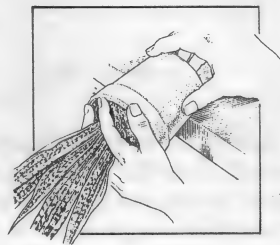
A simpler method for over crowded plants is to divide them in spring or summer.

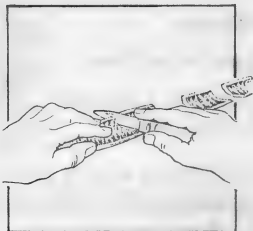
Sansevieria

(Mother-in-law's tongue)

Offsets, or leaf cuttings
18°C (65°F)

Remove mature offsets from base of plants, allow to dry and pot up. Leaves may be cut horizontally in 8cm (3in) sections and rooted in peaty compost. The yellow variegated variety *Sansevieria trifasciata* 'Laurentii' however, will revert to the green form if propagated this way.





Schefflera (Umbrella plant)

Not possible

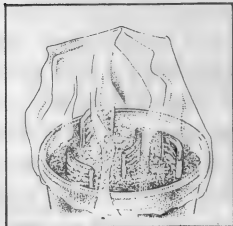
Will not root from cuttings, commercially plants are always grown from seed.

Scindapsis (Devil's ivy)

Leaf cuttings

21°C (70°F)

Root from stem tips with two or three leaves, or individual leaves with a section of main stem attached. Cuttings should root in six to eight weeks in compost or a jar of water – though they are not always successful.

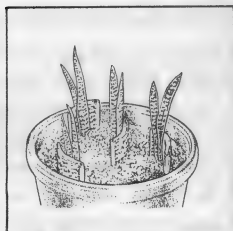


Sedum

Stem cuttings, any time

Temperature not critical

Almost any piece of stem will root in compost.



Selaginella (Creeping moss)

Shoot tips, anytime

23°C (75°F)

Remove shoot tips, insert in a soil-less compost and root in a heated propagator.

Saxifraga sarmentosa (Mother of thousands)

Plantlets, any time

Temperature not critical

Mature plants develop miniature replicas on slender pendulous stems. These can pot individually in small pots of soil-less compost.

Sempervivum

Offsets, any time

Temperature not critical

Remove small rosettes from mature plants and pot them individually in a loam-based compost.

Senecio macroglossus

(German ivy)

Stem cuttings, spring and summer
18°C (65°F)

Stem cuttings with one or two leaves attached will root readily in a soil-less compost without any special treatment. Rooting should take about three to four weeks.

Sonerila

Stem cuttings, spring
21°C (70°F)

Root 8–10cm (3–4in) cuttings in soil-less compost. Best in a heated propagator. Rooting should take about four to six weeks.

Spathiphyllum (Peace lily)

Division, when repotting
15°C (60°F)

Pot up divisions in soil-less compost and keep moist and shaded until well established.

Stephanotis

(Madagascar jasmine)

Stem cuttings, summer
18–21°C (65–70°F)

Sections of stem with a pair of leaves attached will root in soil-less compost. Best rooted in a propagator but should also root in a pot covered with a polythene bag in a warm room. Plants will occasionally form a large, plum-like seedpod which should be allowed to ripen fully and split for seed to be exposed. Sow seeds about 3cm (1in) apart in pots or boxes filled with a multi-purpose compost. Germinate at 18–21°C (65–70°F)

Syngonium (Goose foot)

Stem cuttings, summer
21°C (70°F)

Take 8–10cm (3–4in) sections of stem with one or more leaves attached. Root in a soil-less compost and cover with polythene bag. Rooting should take three to five weeks.



Tolmiea (Pick-a-back plant)

Plantlets, any time
Temperature not critical

Remove a leaf which has a plantlet on it with a piece of stalk and firmly press into a soil-less compost. The plantlet will then root readily.

Tradescantia

Stem cuttings, any time
Temperature not critical

Stem tips will become established in as little as three weeks if inserted in compost. For a full effect, insert five to seven cuttings in a 9cm (3¹/₂in) pot.



Vriesia (Flaming sword)

Offsets, when available
21°C (70°F)

Vriesia splendens produces a single offset near the flower spike. Detach the offset when about 15cm (6in) high and root in a soil-less compost. Rooting should take about four to five weeks.



Yucca

Stem cuttings or offsets, spring or summer
21°C (70°F)

Woody stems can be sawn into sections of almost any length and rooted in moist compost, ideally in a propagator. Rosettes of green leaves formed at the base of the stem can also be rooted in same conditions.





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